



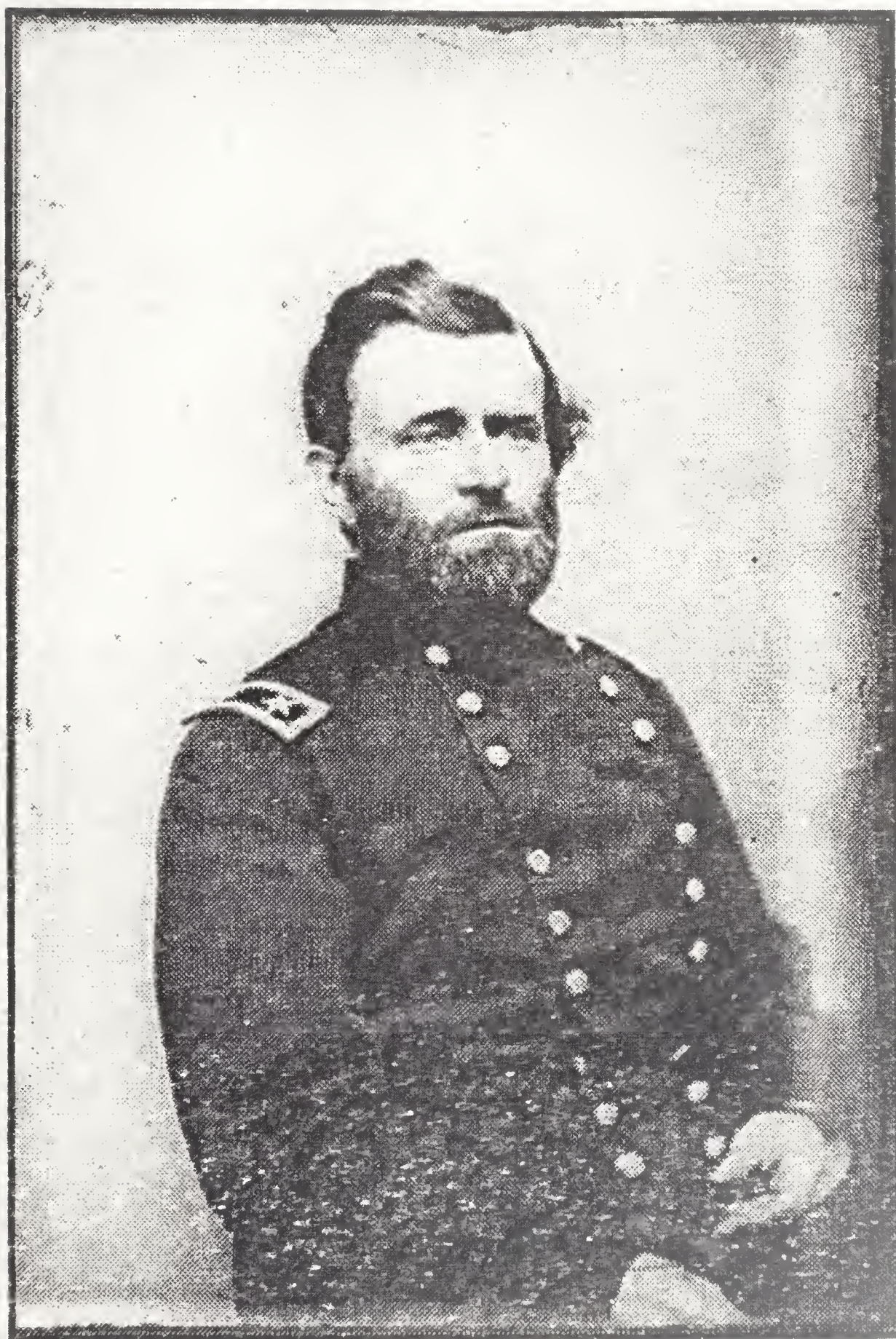
The COMMEMORATIVE TRAIL

SUSCC

P.O. Box 2335

Huntington Beach, CA 92647

The Journal for the Society for U.S. Commemorative Coins 2009, Vol. 26, No. 3 of 3



General
Ulysses
S. Grant

The Commemorative Trail

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2009, Volume 26, #3 of 3

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BASIC EDITORIAL POLICY ...

The Commemorative Trail publishes articles and features from a wide variety of authors and sources. To preserve the integrity of the authors and the contents of items submitted, your editor often leaves most everything intact. It should be stated that the contents of the material and the opinions stated therein do not necessarily reflect the positions and opinions of the editor or the society as a whole.

Gary Beedon, SUSCC Editor, P.O. Box 2335, Huntington Beach, CA 92647

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The President's Message

By Anthony Swiatek

Greetings Society Members

Could not believe how quickly this year has gone by. A late friend who just passed away at 96 years of age, was wished a happy birthday three years prior. His response was "which one?" He said, "At my age, I feel like I have three a year - the way time marches on."

What's happening in the commem market? No dealer promotions to report. Recent attempts to push the Elgin and Gettysburg issues in grades MS-60 through MS-65 ended in a disappointing way.

What is your opinion of the two bills which were introduced in the House of Representatives and senate on October 22nd seeking to create a silver dollar commemorative design? One (H.R. 3912) requests mintages limited to 1,000 coins. The other (S. 1819), wants to share a 1,000 production maximum of proof and uncirculated strikes?

This 2010 issue is to commemorate the opening of the International Civil rights Center and Museum in Greensboro, NC.

Cannot see how Rep. Brad miller, D-NC, and senator Kay Hagan's D-NC, bills will become a reality. Why? We have an existing law which states it would be a violation to produce more than two remembrance preservers in one year. Two excellent programs have already been approved for 2010! They are the disabled veteran and boy scouts of America issues. Howbeit, wouldn't you love to own a commem with a 1,000 mintage or less?

Merry Christmas,

Happy Hanukkah,

Happy Kwanza,

and a Happy New Year.

Anthony J. Swiatek

The Vice President's Message

By Gregory N. Mirsky

Give the little guy a chance to set the tone of the market.

Cringe! I just read in the November 2nd, 2009 issue of *Coin World*® that customers overloaded the United States Mint Web site and telephone system ordering over 6,000 Lincoln Chronicles coin sets per hour within the first five hours on October 15th, 2009. By the end of the day 29,919 sets out of the maximum sales limit of 50,000 were sold.

Why am I cringing? Because these people were not buying the coin — they were buying the packaging. So why should you or I care? Most of the customers of the United States Mint were basically buying the equivalent of a “designer label” instead of a quality product offered by the U.S. Mint. These people who eventually buy the sets see it as an investment. It is not! Unlike the low volume sellers such as the Civil War Battlefield sets, this set has already sold too many to be a sought after item in the future; much like the special sets sold with the American Buffalo Commemoratives they too have yet to provide any boon to their collectors. For some unlucky American Buffalo Commemorative set buyers who were unlucky to receive a particular pouch from a dubious tribe, their investment was a bust —so much so that the United States Mint offered refunds. A very rare move indeed!

Unfortunately, the ultimate experience of these collector sets will only further tarnish the memories of many neophyte collectors and jaundice their future decisions towards our hobby.

If anyone at the United States Mint marketing department is reading this column, may I make some suggestions? How about capping any set to a maximum of 5,000 or 10,000 sets? Offer more distinct varieties of the types of sets available and making sure that each collector has an opportunity to buy at least one set. The secondary market would be able to digest several different sets at a lower mintage than one high mintage set. Just think of how many collectors would say to themselves: “I need one of each.” Also, United States Mint marketing department, while you are at it too, prohibit bulk sales of any commemorative for the first ninety days of a commemorative sale. Give the little guy a chance to set the tone of the market. It is in the best interest of the hobby and ultimately the market.

Greg

Editor's Note:

NI HAO SUSCC MEMBERS!

It sounds like 'knee how' and means HELLO in Chinese.



This issue of the *Trail* is a little late due because of our recent 17-day tour to China. As for counterfeit U. S. commemorative coins in China, I did look in Shanghai, Xion, Beijing, as well as in other strange places in shops and in the local outside markets. No commemorative counterfeits were found! But, I did purchase 56 counterfeits of Chinese coins, plus a nice counterfeit 1874 S U. S. trade dollar that has a decent amount of silver in it. Bargaining with the friendly merchants was enjoyable and a lot of fun.

In the north the people are known as noodle men and noodle women. In the south they are known as rice women and rice men. The rice women tend to weigh less than those in the north. After thinking about bring a half dozen rice women home from the tour and saying something out loud, my wife gave me a strange look. She said something like, "Do they do housework?" (grin)

Two local SUSCC members wanted to see a photo in the *Trail* of the Great Wall north of Beijing. So here is a photo of the editor on the Great Wall north of Beijing, China.

Gary Beedon

SUSCC Secretary's Report:

Welcome to our New Members!

R-4029	John Barkley, CA
R-4030	James Berryhill, TX
R-4031	Sandi Funseth, CA

Welcome to our Returning Member!

R-0118	Robert Cassidy, PA
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SUSCC at the ANA Convention in LA:

The informal meeting at the SUSCC meeting at the ANA Convention in Los Angeles, CA had a turnout that was a bit light, (as expected). We had a grand total of SEVEN in attendance! The other fifty possible attendees were out on the floor buying commemoratives one mentioned. SUSCC members included Gary Beedon, Thomas Dvorak and Chris Robertson. In the large meeting room we had an informal discussion on such things as U. S. classical and modern commemoratives. We talked about some under and some over rated commemorativess, as well as grading by some of the slab houses, etc.

Wanted: Something for publication in the "Trail"

We really need your input!

Do you have something you can share with our membership?

We are asking for your input, even if it is a few lines of information.

SUSCC Treasurer's Report:

The balance of the SUSCC account on November 1, 2009 is \$18652.89.

This is an increase of \$1824.17 on the balance from January 1, 2009 of \$16828.72.

Transactions during this period:

Dues and donations received (\$3600).

Printing and mailing The Commemorative Trail – 2 issues (\$1641.73).

Secretary's postage expenses (\$134.10).

Below is a photo of the SUSCC treasurer waiting in lower lock #1 of 5 at the Three Gorges Dam on the Yangtse River in China.

No, she is not spending any SUSCC money in China or elsewhere. Notice the old Chinese ship in front and the two large doors of the lock ahead.



Presented to:

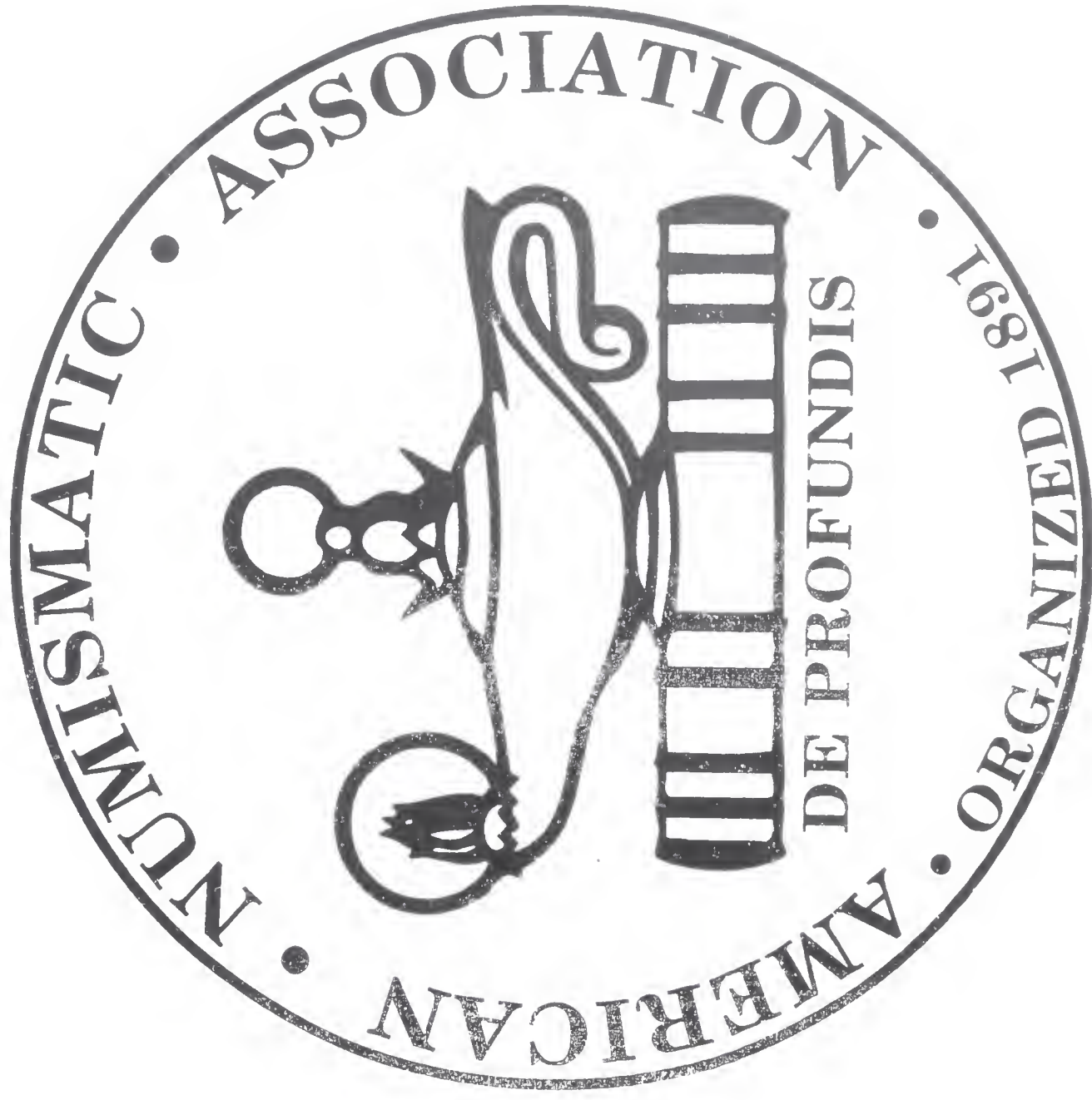
*Society for U.S.
Commemorative Coins*

For Twenty Five Years
Membership

118th Anniversary Convention
Los Angeles, California
August 7, 2009


ANA President

TWENTY-FIVE



MEMBER SINCE 1984

1922 Grant Memorial

By Anthony Swiatek



Obverse—no star.



Obverse—Grant with star.



Reverse

Reason For Issue: The centenary of the birth of General Ulysses S. Grant, late president of the United States.

Authorization: Authorized per Act of February 2nd, 1922 with a maximum of 250,000 half dollars and 10,000 gold dollars.

Official Sale Price:	1922 Half Dollar:	\$1 (Later \$1.50)
	1922 No Star Half Dollar:	\$1 (Later \$0.75)
	1922 Star \$1:	\$3.50
	1922 No Star \$1:	\$3

Production figures

Date	Business Strikes	Assay Coins	Proofs	Melted	Net Mintage
1922 ★ 50¢	5,006	6	4?	750	4,250
1922 50¢	95,055	55	4?	27,650	67,350
1922 ★ \$1	5,016	16	4?	0	5,000
1922 \$1	5,000	0	4?	0	5,000

Current market values

Date	EF-40	AU-50	MS-60	MS-63	MS-64	MS-65	MS-66
1922 ★ 50¢	\$625	\$900	\$1,225	1,850	\$2,700	\$6,900	\$16,000
1922 50¢	\$100	\$120	\$135	\$165	\$320	\$735	\$1,700
1922 ★ \$1	\$1,500	\$1,500	\$1,550	\$1,900	\$3,225	\$3,775	\$4,300
1922 \$1	\$1,500	\$1,625	\$1,650	\$1,850	\$3,200	\$3,750	\$4,000

Designs by Laura Gardin Fraser

Obverse

Both the gold and silver issues portray the bust of General Ulysses S. Grant, adapted from a photo by Matthew Brady, in uniform, facing right. Located in the left field and right field respectively is his name "ULYSSES S. GRANT". Situated below the bust are the anniversary dates 1822-1922. "UNITED STATES OF AMERICA" arcs above; "HALF DOLLAR" or "ONE DOLLAR" below. A small letter "G", representing the artist's maiden name, was placed between the dates by the Mint, as was previously done in other locations with the Columbian and the Pilgrim issues. Located in the right field above the "N" of GRANT on the variety is the incused five pointed star. The only difference in design between the issues is the word "HALF" and "ONE" indicating the denomination.

Our past President was named Hiram Ulysses Grant. In 1838, the congressman who made his appointment to the US Military Academy at West Point, NY thought Ulysses was his first name and his middle name, Simpson, was his mother's family name. He never corrected such because he knew he would be jested about "H.U.G."

Reverse

Both the gold and silver issues depict a fenced clapboard house symbolic of the house where Grant lived as a boy in Georgetown, Ohio. (He was born in Point Pleasant, Ohio where he supposedly lived until he was eleven months old. His autobiography says two years old). Maple trees are present in the coin's field, "E PLURIBUS UNUM" to the left and "IN GOD WE TRUST" above. This issue designed by Laura Gardin Fraser (who also created the Alabama, Fort Vancouver and Oregon Trail obverse) makes no reference to a Grant memorial. She permits the design itself to tell the story. Her maiden initial (G) was most likely used by the Mint, since her husband's initial (F) was placed on the Indian Head ("Buffalo") 5-cent piece, which was also being produced that year.

Origins of the Grant Coins

These coins which bear the same design –except for the denomination words "HALF" and "ONE"- were struck at the Philadelphia Mint during March 1922. The first 5,000 gold coins (plus 16 for assay purposes) were struck with the "star." After the star was removed, 5,000 gold dollars were struck. With the gold production completed, 5,006 silver half dollars were produced with the star. Then with the star removed 95,055 plain Grants were coined. Eight obverse and six reverse dies were used to make the silver issue. The Association's committee suggested a single star be placed on the gold dollar coin to earn extra funds. They were amazed to see a star was also added to 5,000 half dollars.

There exists an obverse hub trial for the Grant Star half dollar issue, as well as die trial pieces struck in silver, copper, nickel and brass. Additionally produced was a reverse die trial struck in silver, nickel, white metal. Also struck were hub trials of the Grant Star gold dollar, obverse and reverse die trial pieces struck in copper and white metal. There also exists a piece struck on a broad bronze planchet with an uneven impression. It is 23.20 millimeters in diameter.

Does the incused star have any significance? Had Grant been a one-star general, such would have been appropriate. However, Grant's rank in the Union Army requires three additional stars. Unfortunately, the star bears no significance, as do the incused 2X2 on the Alabama variety and the 2★4 on the Missouri variety, other than satisfying the Grant Centenary Memorial Commission.

All coins were offered for sale in April 1922, with the silver half dollars selling at \$1.00 each, and the plain gold dollars selling at \$3.00 each. The star variety sold for \$3.50. No gold coins were returned to the Mint. When silver sales, which were previously excellent, finally came to a standstill, it was decided by the Commission to offer approximately 29,000 specimens of the plain variety at 75 cents each in lots of 10 or more coins. About 800 unsold "with star" specimens were offered for sale at \$1.25 each.

There were few buyers, thus 27,650 plain specimens were returned, along with 750 “stars,” to the Mint and melted. This leaves us with a present day mintage of 67,350 “Grant plains” and only 4,250 Grant “with star” specimens.

The Grant Half Dollars Today

The Grant plain or No Star half dollar is quite available in EF-AU condition. I suggest selecting naturally worn, un-doctored pieces without detracting surface cuts, if acquisition is desired. Majority of this creation resides in the MS-60 through MS-63 state and to a lesser degree, in strict MS-64 condition. Surface attractiveness should be your key when buying this commemorative. Future potential begins at the MS-64+ level. Any grade less should be acquired for the pure joy of collecting. Eye appealing MS-65 and loftier rated specimens are not that easily located.

Luster will range from blazing frosty (not the norm), to dull frosty, displaying that powdery look. Strike rarely presents a problem for this issue. The detail in Grant’s hair, beginning from the temple area and going inward above the ear about sixty percent toward the back of the head will be faintly seen. This was caused by the wearing of the obverse dies in that area as the coins were being struck, since little detail was present to begin with. (The same is not true for the small gold dollars, for all hair details is present in the aforementioned area.) The above mentioned is accepted as characteristic for the issue.

The rarer Grant star issue which is a very popular collector coin can be obtained in EF-AU condition. Unfortunately, most of the encountered pieces will display some form of surface doctoring whose objective is to hide some degree of surface wear or bag marks or slide marks, etc. It is truly a scarce coin in grades MS-60 through MS-64 and a rare coin in the loftier classifications. This is the result of much numismatic abuse. Luster will range from semi-proof like to blazing lustrous (both not the norm) to dull satiny. It isn’t too often that one encounters blazing lustrous pieces. Strike will pose no problem for the issue. Those early specimens with no die clash marks will show fine hair detail in the center of Grant’s head, while coinage displaying the clash mark will not. Approximately fifty pieces were created before the dies clashed. Creation was produced from perfect, clashed, and lapped dies. Those raised lines which can be observed in the obverse field are die polishing marks. If cut into this surface, they are detracting scratches and lower the coin’s value. To date, no error coinage has entered the marketplace.

Detecting counterfeits

In 1935, when the Grant With Star issue was selling for \$65 and the Grant Plain for \$3.50, a dentist decided to purchase a quantity of the less expensive issue and personally incused his own star. Since we cannot appreciate his effort in attempting to make more

Grant with Star specimens — which was the highest priced commemorative of all U.S. commemorative issues in 1935 — available to collectors and investors, we must be able to distinguish between his “addition” and the Philadelphia Mint’s “edition.”

The following distinguishing characteristics will help you determine whether the star is genuine:

A most obvious clash mark will be present around Grant’s chin and in the area of his necktie and by the letter “G” of “GRANT” just right of his tie. Virtually all of the genuine issue will display these characteristics.



Note the “little island” inside the star

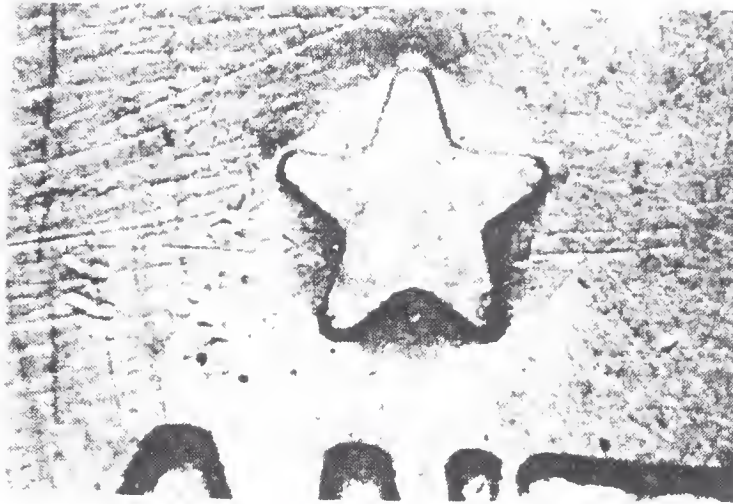
Those few much rarer specimens produced before the dies clashed will not flaunt the said clash marks. They will reveal a small raised pimple or lump of metal just within the star located just below its nine o’clock location. Such can also be seen on the clashed die variety.

The star is located above the letter “N” and not the letter “A” of “GRANT”, as seen on some altered pieces.



Thus the coin is genuine. Since the star was added, we label such an altered surface coin.

This coin is also a genuine “No Star” issue. The star has been punched in by the aforementioned dentist thus creating the “Dental Star” altered surface coin.



The “Dental Star” altered coin.

Is your Grant circulated or Mint state?

Obverse

Wear first occurs on General Grant’s cheekbone. Coin’s rim does little to protect this area which is virtually equal in height. The slightest abuse will cause friction. Look for a difference in metal texture, in this location. Portrait is the primary focal area. Marks and negatives are detrimental to value and grade in this location. Prime target for whizzing and other forms of doctoring.

Reverse

Issue’s rim does an excellent job of protecting the first areas to display wear. This is the central section of leaves located directly above the second and third tree trunks from the left. If this coin is to display wear, it will occur on the obverse.

Related material

To date, original mailing holders accompanied by stamped envelopes have yet to surface or any other associated material.

Future Potential of the Grant Memorial Half Dollar

Population Figures

Date	Service		AU	MS	MS	MS	MS	MS	MS	MS	MS	MS
			58	60	62	63	64	65	66	67	68	69
1922	NGC		60	2	182	604	1395	657	191	25	1	0
1922	PCGS		117	24	313	978	1300	688	219	32	0	0
1922	Combined		77	26	495	1582	2695	1345	410	57	1	0
Date	Service		AU	MS	MS	MS	MS	MS	MS	MS	MS	MS
			58	60	62	63	64	65	66	67	68	69
1922	NGC		15	0	92	231	539	198	42	6	0	0
Star												
1922	PCGS		45	15	124	319	447	143	30	3	0	0
Star												
1922	Combined		60	15	216	550	986	341	72	9	0	0
Star												

In circulated condition, the Grant without star is available. Pieces exhibiting a small dot between the 22 of the date 1922 bring no premiums, at present. Our rarer Star issue is usually encountered whizzed or cleaned. These coins are worth less than the un-doctored coin's bid level. Your higher mintage Grant plain or no star is under valued in grades MS-60 through MS-64. During the May 1989 market high, there existed an approximate \$1,500 difference between the latter grade and our MS-65 coinage. Expect the item to be promoted during the next upturn. Acquire the aforesaid for the pride of ownership. I would reduce population figure between 20% to 25%. Real future potential begins with attractive flashy MS-64+ no star pieces; certainly worth 25% to 50% over bid levels.

A strictly graded MS-65 Grant Plain is moderately undervalued. Reject the dark, dull and debatable coin — which is not undervalued! Noted past price spread between this category and your MS-66 rating was \$3,500! I would lower population figures by 15% to 20%. Excellent future potential here, as well as in the rarer MS-66 grade and MS-67 grades! Were a buyer to believe an auction offering can upgrade from a MS-67 to a MS-68, he or she will pay much more for the coin! Simply remember to pass if such a Grant without star should cross your path flaunting these lofty numbers, but doesn't salute you or address your fancy.

Our silver Grant with Star commemoratives, grading MS-60 through MS-62 have actually risen in value from the noted market high! Currently, they are fairly priced. Good future potential really begins with those pieces grading MS-63 and higher. Prefer an

attractive original un-dipped MS-63+ coin. Ditto MS-64 coinage. Your non-clash mark variety can — but does not always — bring more money. Howbeit, all is dependent upon the coin. I would lower census between 26% and 32%. Past (1989) price spread between the latter grade and MS-65 was a whopping \$14,000! Why? So few had been encapsulated at the higher level.

Great coin to possess in MS-65 condition. Pass on the questionable. You want to see original surfaces — should your coin be lightly toned. I would lower census between 17% and 23%. Excellent future potential for the rarest silver commemorative struck since 1892, in grades MS-63 and higher. In MS-66 condition we are talking about a rare item. I would reduce its population by 37%! What a great coin to have in one's collection. The said is especially true for the very rarer MS-67 and MS-68 ratings. Who wouldn't love to own a \$32,000-\$38,000 example in this lofty grade?

The Grant Gold Dollars Today

Specimens of either issue residing in the EF-AU state are not abundant. Some form of numismatic abuse has caused their downfall. Based on their history, Grant gold dollars grading from MS-60 through MS-63 (no star or star variety) should only be considered for the pure joy of collecting. The plain is a bit rarer in grades up to MS-62. Future value definitely lies in these gold disks strictly grading MS-65 and better. The No Star issue will be more difficult to acquire in MS-65 and higher levels. Present value spread does not reflect this situation because of the demand or pressure to locate either piece. Such is the reason why most price guide list close to equal value for both issues in grades MS-64 and higher. No error coinage has yet to enter the market scene.

Detecting counterfeits

Die struck counterfeits do exist. The telltale signs we should look for are file marks between "UNITED" and the rim, and die scratches above and between the "OF" as well as the "A" in "OF AMERICA", on the reverse. Also a number of spikes will angle into the field from the "P" of "PLURIBUS" half way up to the "I" of "IN". Also look for depressions on the reverse fence. Cast fakes display a blurry or dull powdery appearance.

Related material

To date, original mailing holders accompanied by stamped envelopes have yet to surface or any other associated material.

Future Potential of the Grant Memorial Gold Dollars

Population Figures

Date	Service		AU	MS	MS	MS	MS	MS	MS	MS	MS	MS
			58	60	62	63	64	65	66	67	68	69
1922	NGC		21	2	77	113	268	239	229	67	1	0
1922	PCGS		47	8	121	284	519	403	389	120	0	0
1922	Combined		68	10	198	397	787	632	618	187	1	0
Date	Service		AU	MS	MS	MS	MS	MS	MS	MS	MS	MS
			58	60	62	63	64	65	66	67	68	69
1922	NGC		6	1	41	88	304	280	272	76	4	0
Star												
1922	PCGS	0	23	7	49	215	550	488	552	231	1	0
Star												
1922	Combined	0	29	8	90	308	854	768	824	307	5	0
Star												

When examining the entire commemorative production from 1892 through 1954, the most expensive coins available in Extra Fine (EF or XF) circulated condition (except for the \$50 issue) are the Grant gold dollars (\$1,500), followed by the \$2-1/2 Pan-Pac (\$1,425). There are circulated silver issues, such as the Hawaiian (\$1,650) and Spanish Trail (\$1,150) which are worth more than all and most lightly worn gold issues respectively within the eleven-piece set.) At current levels, both strikings appear somewhat under priced in grades EF-AU through MS-64. The rarer No Star variety in MS-63+ or MS-64+ condition, offers a better chance at future gains. Reject the unattractive and questionable pieces. During the 1989 marketplace high, price spread between MS-64 and MS-65 Grant gold dollars was approximately \$3,300. I would lower population figures between 23% and 27%.

Grant plains grading MS-65 are undervalued at present levels. Eye appealing pieces offer very good future potential. Consider this variety which is undervalued as previously noted, over the star. Reject the questionable offerings. Difference in value between this and your MS-66 striking was approximately \$6,100 during the noted high! Populations were much lower.

Very good future especially for the no star issue in the MS-66 category. Both grants would have cost you \$32,000+, eighteen years ago! Warned against their purchase, because I was aware of too many small high grade raw hoard pieces which would eventually increase pops and drastically lower values. I wouldn't mind owning one of those lofty MS-67 rarer Grant plains. Wonderful coin. Ditto the MS-68 rating. Just be certain to carefully examine grant's portrait on these high grade pieces. ☺

LINCOLN...

THE CIVIL WAR...

‘IN GOD WE TRUST’

by Darrin Dayton (R-3048)

Since this is still the ‘Year of Lincoln’ (the 200th anniversary of his birth), we surely cannot separate his memory from the great event that encompassed most all of his efforts while President ... The Civil War. This was an exceptionally bloody and costly war which not only destroyed lives and property but could have destroyed our union if not for the wise counsel and skill of President Lincoln, his advisers, the military, and undoubtedly the hand of God. But thankfully, we are all united still today, almost 150 years later.

Among other things, The Civil War was about states' rights, slavery and economics. It was also about conviction, courage, faith and hope! Looking back, it is also a reminder for us today of how fragile unions, governments, life itself can be. We must not forget our history as Americans, but rather, use our understanding and reflection upon it as a guide and strength for our future.

Commemorative coins are wonderful tool to help us do this. They are a valuable tool for remembrance and reflection, not only for us as collectors, but also, for those young and old we have opportunity to share them with. We're fortunate to have several coins that depict people and events related to The Civil War. There's the many Abraham Lincoln coins, as mentioned in our previous ‘Commemorative Trail’. There's also the 1922 U.S. Grant Memorial Half Dollar and Gold Dollar; the 1925 Stone Mountain Half

Dollar (depicting Robert E. Lee); the 1936 Battle of Gettysburg 75th Anniversary Half Dollar; the 1937 Battle of Antietam 75th Anniversary Half Dollar. And of course, our modern 1995 Civil War Half Dollar, Dollar, and \$5 Gold coin (to name a few).

The 1995 Civil War Dollar is most poignant for me, as the obverse depicts a soldier giving a much-needed drink to an exhausted fellow soldier on the battlefield. While on the reverse, an amazing statement about Gettysburg Battlefield by Joshua Chamberlain: 'In great deeds something abides. On great fields something stays. Forms change and pass; bodies disappear; but spirits linger to consecrate ground for the vision place of souls.'

Indeed, our American history is filled with courageous and wise deeds by many, many people. And our glorious land is marked with innumerable reminders of famous battles and history altering events. The fields may change over time but the spirit of what took place on those lands will always be a reminder of where we've come from as a nation, what things we've overcome, and the vision we should have for our future as a nation. These places, these coins, are a vital and valuable reminder of our sacred history, and should always be treasured.

While it's not technically a commemorative coin, there's another U.S. coin that has some interesting Civil War history behind it ... the 1864 2¢ piece. As Americans turned closer to God and religion during the Civil War, one pastor from Ridleyville, Pennsylvania, Mark Watkinson wrote to the Secretary of the Treasury, Salmon Chase, urging a provision be made for recognition of God in some form on our money...so that we would be notably set apart from other nations and placed under God's protection, as we claim.

Chase (who was quite religious himself) proceeded with plans to eventually place the first 'In God We Trust' on our American coinage. Chase stated 'No nation can be strong except in the strength of God, or safe except in His defense. The trust of our people in God should be declared on our national coins.'

There were two varieties of the coin, one with the new motto in small letters and one with large. The small motto coins are very costly today in higher grades. This is a short series to collect (1864-1873) and a great addition to any collection, considering not only the historical significance of the coin, but also, it's unusual denomination.

While the Civil War was a horrible war and a mark on our nation's history, much good did come from it (a more solid union and greater freedoms for all citizens). Yet even an event as significant as this has a way of being kept in our past. Our Commemorative Civil War coins and the unique two cent piece can and should be visible reminders not only of our human flaws and frailties, but also, our convictions and courage as a nation; and that, as Treasury Secretary Chase similarly stated, the true strength and safety of America is found 'In God We Trust'! ☺

Connecticut Coin Commemorates Tree Where Colony's Royal Charter was Hidden

Editor's Note: PHOTO PROOF™ article courtesy of Numismatic Guarantee Corporation and David Lange (R-1779, NJ)

"Mighty oaks from little acorns grow." And it is the mighty Charter Oak that dominates the obverse of the Connecticut Tercentenary half dollar. When an agent of the English Crown attempted to confiscate this colony's royal charter in 1687, a cavity within the ancient landmark served as a secure hiding place for their treasured document, thus assuring Connecticut's continued independence.



Felled by a storm nearly two hundred years later, the Charter Oak was subsequently memorialized by the placement of a white marble marker at its former location and the naming of adjacent roadways after the revered tree.

The earliest settlements in Connecticut were established by the Dutch about 1614. As in so many Dutch communities, English settlers soon came in sufficient numbers to dominate this region.

No formal government existed until 1635 when John Winthrop the younger, armed with a patent from the Earl of Warwick

(who had no legal authority to grant it), proclaimed himself governor of the region. He was ultimately recognized as such by the "freemen" of Connecticut, although the colony itself had no legal standing until 1662 when it was finally granted a royal charter by King Charles II.

The King's successor, James II, sought to disband all of the old colonial divisions and declared a consolidated Dominion of New England, naming Sir Edmund Andros as its governor in 1686.

Arriving in Hartford, Andros announced before a meeting of the General Court that he had come to seize the royal charter, which was then in the room. Acting quickly, the proud citizens of Connecticut doused the lights, allowing Joseph Wadsworth to grab the precious document and flee the room. He secreted it within an ancient tree on Wyllys Hill, and this silent guardian was ever-afterward known as the Charter Oak.

Frustrated in his attempt to gain control of Connecticut and the other obstinate colonies of New England, Andros was soon returned to the Motherland in chains following the overthrow of his patron, James II, in the "Glorious Revolution" of 1688. Connecticut would thereafter be an independent entity until joining the union of states a century later.

Acknowledging 1635 as the beginning of formal government in Connecticut, that state appointed a Tercentenary Commission to oversee the celebration planned for 1935. Its chairman was Samuel Fisher. Unlike many such commissions which wait until the last minute to request a commemorative

coin, or even seek one that's coined subsequent to the event, the Connecticut organization was quick in prompting legislation for its coin.

Passed with only minimal debate, the Act of June 21, 1934 called for the coining of 25,000 half dollars to mark the 300th anniversary of Connecticut's founding. Despite the usual directive that the sponsoring organization pay for all of the Mint's expenses associated with this coinage, the project was actually undertaken by the Public Works Administration (PWA), one of President Franklin D. Roosevelt's "alphabet soup" relief agencies.

Local artist Henry G. Kreis (who later created the Bridgeport, Connecticut half dollar) was commissioned to prepare models under the direction of famed sculptor Paul Manship. This collaboration produced superb designs of a highly stylized character.

Both the Charter Oak, with its bold, oversized leaves, and the monumental eagle, with its defiant expression, may be included among the finest elements to appear within the commemorative series. The Commission of Fine Arts gave its provisional approval of the Kreis models on December 6, 1934, subject to his strengthening certain features of the eagle. This was done, and the final versions of obverse and reverse were accepted by the Treasury Department on February 6, 1935.

The central element of the obverse is, of course, the famed Charter Oak. It is modeled after a painting by Charles DeWolf Brownell belonging to the Connecticut Historical Society and created just one year before the tree was toppled in 1856. A fictitious hole has been added for its thematic value; otherwise, the depiction is fairly accurate (discounting the oversize leaves, a bit of artistic license). Below it are the words *THE CHARTER OAK*. Above, arranged in arcs around the periphery are the statutory inscriptions *IN GOD WE*

TRUST and *LIBERTY*. The ground beneath the tree forms an exergue in which *CONNECTICUT 1635 -1935* appears in two lines.



On the reverse is a three-quarters view of an eagle perched upon a rocky mound. *E PLURIBUS UNUM* is to the left of its right leg. Arranged in arcs around the periphery are *UNITED STATES OF AMERICA* and *HALF DOLLAR*. The eagle is surrounded by an arc of 13 tiny stars. The artist's models are unsigned.

In April and May of 1935, the Philadelphia Mint coined 25,018 Connecticut half dollars (the odd 18 coins were reserved for assay and later destroyed). These were available well in time for the Tercentenary, and most were sold to residents of

Connecticut and visitors to the celebration at \$1.00 apiece.

The coins were so well received, in fact, that the Tercentenary Commission's executive secretary, Herbert L. Crapo, confessed to prominent coin dealer and notorious commemorative promoter L. W. Hoffecker that "We have disposed of our entire original allotment of 25,000, and are having some difficulty in reserving a few which we want to present as gifts to dignitaries."

When the speculative market for commemorative coins heated up in 1936, this issue quickly rose in value to \$6.00. By comparison, a proof silver dollar of the Seated Liberty design was then valued at only \$5.00!

Due to its wide distribution, no known hoards of Connecticut half dollars ever came into the market. With most examples sold to the general public, many seen today have been mishandled. This has served to keep its value fairly high for such a relatively recent coin.

There's no indication that these coins were actually spent as money, but many have been nicked, abraded or harshly cleaned. The grades typically encountered range from AU-50 to MS-63; quite a few mint state coins have suffered from being "dipped" in mild acids to remove unsightly tarnish acquired during years of storage on attic shelves or in dresser drawers.

MS-64 examples are scarce, but MS-65 and higher grades are especially so. Although most Connecticut halves are well struck, the small and shallow stars may be indistinct. Check for wear at the base of the tree and on the upper part of the eagle's wing.

The late numismatic scholar Walter Breen reported the existence of four or five matte proofs, at least one of which is traceable to the estate of former Mint Chief Engraver John R. Sinnock, a connoisseur of this style. These have been faked by chemical treat-

ment of well-struck, regular issue specimens to simulate the etched appearance of a matte proof. Authentication of any proof offered is mandatory.

More available and quite collectable are examples of the original packaging in which Connecticut halves were sold. There are numerous varieties of small boxes, each designed to hold a single coin. These come in both hinge-top and slide-out styles, usually with a gold or silver foil wrapping.

This is typically printed with the state seal or an inscription referring to one of several banks which distributed these coins. With a velour interior and sometimes additional printing inside, these are very attractive and eagerly sought as tie-ins to the coins themselves.

SPECIFICATIONS:

Diameter: 30.6 millimeters

Weight: 12.5 grams

Composition: .900 silver, .100 copper

Edge: Reeded

Net Weight: .36169 ounce pure silver

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1935 Connecticut half-dollar mailing envelope and insert from Hartford National Bank & Trust Company

1635

1935

On behalf of the Connecticut Tercentenary Commission we wish to acknowledge your order for Commemorative Half-Dollars.

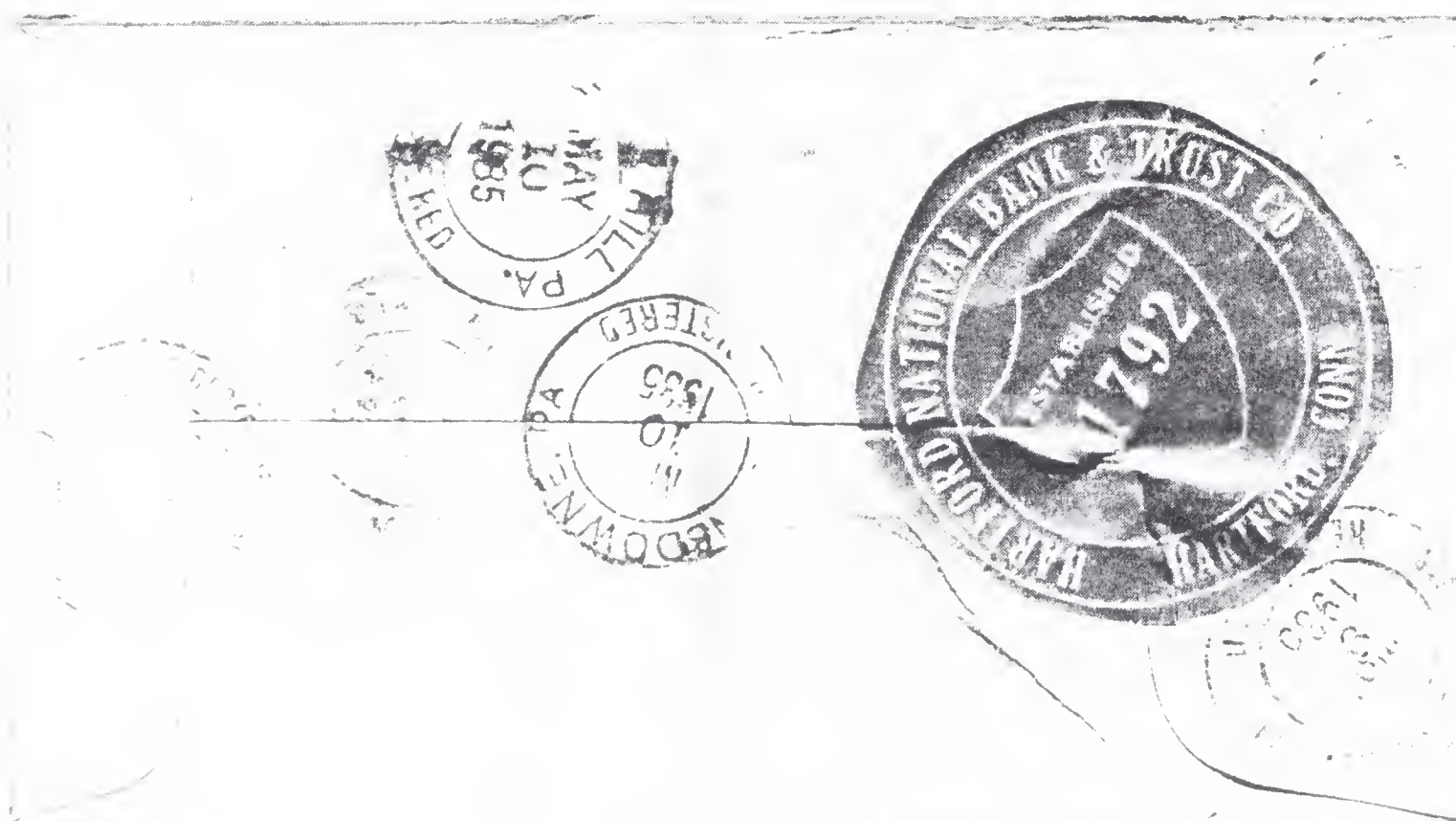
This bank, as the oldest and largest in the State, is assisting in the distribution of these coins, as a part of its contribution to the celebration of the three hundredth anniversary of the settlement of Connecticut.

You will find enclosed the coin(s) which you requested.



Hartford National Bank & Trust Company

Established 1792





THE PHOENIX INSURANCE COMPANY

HARTFORD, CONN.

April 26, 1935

TO OUR AGENTS:

The State of Connecticut will celebrate, this summer and early autumn, the Three Hundredth Anniversary of its settlement. The history of the Colony, including the two outstanding events of its early days, — the adoption of "The Fundamental Orders" in 1639, which really marked the beginning of constitutional government in this country, and the successful hiding of the Charter granted by Charles the Second when the demand for its surrender was made in 1687, — is replete with interesting and dramatic incidents.

The spirit pervading all of the celebrations is that of democracy and freedom — ideals for which Connecticut has stood foursquare ever since her pioneer days. From April to the end of September, more than one hundred cities and towns will stage enthusiastic celebrations, reunions, home-visiting days, and the like.

Connecticut is the spiritual mother of many States beyond the confines of the original Thirteen Colonies. From her came pioneer stock that crossed the Alleghenies to spread civilization in the wilderness. From Ohio, the descendants of her first settlers passed on to the Pacific Coast. Thus was established a conquest of ideals, if not of territory.

Many of the descendants of these sturdy pioneer folk are undoubtedly to be found among our representatives scattered throughout the length and breadth of the land. The purpose of this communication is to extend to all of these persons, as well as to others who are interested in the beginnings of constitutional government in America, and in the noteworthy history of one of the Thirteen Colonies, an invitation to visit the Commonwealth of Connecticut during the period of these celebrations.

We hope that our representatives, their families, friends, and the members of their office staffs, will not hesitate to communicate with us in respect to hotel accommodations, and to anything else they may wish to know concerning celebrations here, there, or the other place. We wish them to feel free to use our office (30 Trinity Street) as headquarters during their stay in Connecticut.

Very truly yours,

Edw. Billigan
President.

Creative Puns to Fill "Trail" Space

1. The roundest knight at King Arthur's round table was Sir Cumference. He acquired his size from too much pi.
2. I thought I saw an eye doctor on an Alaskan island, but it turned out to be an optical Aleutian.
3. She was only a whiskey maker, but he loved her still.
4. A rubber band pistol was confiscated from algebra class because it was a weapon of math disruption.
5. The butcher backed into the meat grinder and got a little behind in his work.
6. No matter how much you push the envelope, it'll still be stationery.
7. A dog gave birth to puppies near the road and was cited for littering.
8. A grenade thrown into a kitchen in France would result in Linoleum Blownapart.
9. Two silk worms had a race. They ended up in a tie.
10. Time flies like an arrow. Fruit flies like a banana.
11. A hole has been found in the nudist camp wall. The police are looking into it.
12. Atheism is a non-prophet organization.
13. Two hats were hanging on a hat rack in the hallway. One hat said to the other, 'You stay here; I'll go on a head.'
14. I wondered why the baseball kept getting bigger. Then it hit me.
15. A sign on the lawn at a drug rehab center said: 'Keep off the Grass.'
16. A small boy swallowed some coins and was taken to a hospital. When his grandmother telephoned to ask how he was, a nurse said, 'No change yet.'
17. A chicken crossing the road is poultry in motion.
19. The short fortune-teller who escaped from prison was a small medium at large.
20. The soldier who survived mustard gas and pepper spray is now a seasoned veteran.
21. A backward poet writes inverse.
22. In democracy it's your vote that counts. In feudalism it's your count that votes.

Wisconsin Centennial Half Dollar

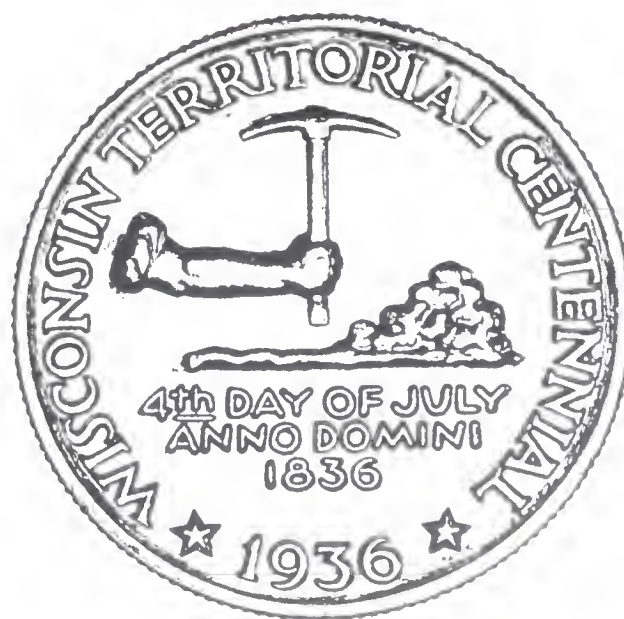
Editor's Note: *PHOTO PROOF™* article courtesy of Numismatic Guarantee Corporation and David Lange.

When collectors are asked to identify their favorite U.S. commemorative coins, the answers given frequently include titles such as Oregon Trail, Panama-Pacific, Gettysburg and California Jubilee. Rarely heard, if at all, is the name Wisconsin. Having neither an attractive design nor any unique features, to many collectors it seems just one of those coins needed to complete a type set. Yet, all commemoratives tell a story, whether it be about the theme depicted or about the coin itself. In this respect, the Wisconsin Territorial Centennial half dollar is fully equal to its peers.

territorial status within the United States, an event that occurred in 1836. It didn't become an actual state until 1848. Long before these developments, however, Wisconsin was a little-known frontier, a temporary home to trappers passing through in search of beavers and other animals bearing desirable pelts. These animal trappers, and the missionaries who followed, were primarily French, as this land was then a part of New France. Ceded to Great Britain following the French and Indian Wars of the mid-18th century, Wisconsin later passed to the infant United States as part of Britain's settlement after



As the name implies, this issue marks the 100th anniversary of Wisconsin's achieving



the War of Independence. Largely ignored, Wisconsin attained greater importance to

Americans when threatened by another war with Britain from 1812-15. In the 1820s, large deposits of lead were discovered in the southwestern part of Wisconsin, which by then was included within the Michigan Territory. The new mining industry brought a flood of prospectors to complement the established fur trade. As the number of white people in the region grew, conflict with the native population was inevitable. In a series of engagements known collectively as the Blackhawk Wars, these inhabitants were either subdued or driven away. Now important enough to be a territory in its own right, Wisconsin was so named in 1836. Its first governor, Henry Dodge, assumed his office on Independence Day, July 4.

The centennial of this event in 1936 was marked by a number of celebrations around the state. Almost as an afterthought, the Wisconsin Centennial Commission appointed a Coinage Committee to seek a commemorative half dollar, sales of which would aid in funding various activities associated with the anniversary. The bill approving this issue was not passed until May 15, 1936, and it included two other commemorative coins marking the centennial of Bridgeport, Connecticut and the tercentenary of Swedish settlement in Delaware. All three coins recognized events of purely local or regional significance and were scarcely worthy of commemoration on U.S. coinage, yet this was 1936, the peak year for promoting such issues.

Wisconsin's Coinage Committee had already chosen a young university art student to prepare models based on their concept. This included the territorial seal on one side and a badger (part of the state seal) on the other. David Parsons' models, however, were unacceptable to the Mint, since they were in very high relief. Asked by the committee to name a suitable replacement, the Mint referred the matter to

the Commission of Fine Arts, which recruited sculptor Benjamin Hawkins of New York. Given just three weeks to complete his models, Hawkins proved up to the task. They were submitted to the Mint on June 3, 1936 and approved by the Commission of Fine Arts two days later.

The obverse of the Wisconsin half dollar depicts a badger in profile, facing left and perched upon a log. Behind it, arranged vertically, are three arrows, symbolizing the three engagements of the Blackhawk Wars, and an olive branch, denoting the peace which followed. The statutory motto *IN GOD WE TRUST* is crowded into the space between these symbols *E PLURIBUS UNUM* and *LIBERTY* are arranged in arc form above and below, respectively. *UNITED STATES OF AMERICA* and *HALF DOLLAR* are inscribed around the periphery. Hawkins' small initial H is below the log. The reverse depicts the old territorial seal, with a disembodied arm holding a pickaxe suspended above a pile of lead ore. The inscription *4th DAY OF JULY ANNO DOMINI 1836* is arranged in three lines (the Latin part seemingly unnecessary). Encircling the coin's periphery is the legend *WISCONSIN TERRITORIAL CENTENNIAL* and the date 1936, these separated by stars.

The legislation for this coin specified a minimum mintage of 25,000 but no maximum. The Centennial Commission wisely opted to take a conservative course, and just 25,015 pieces were coined at the Philadelphia Mint in July of 1936 (the odd 15 coins were reserved for assay and were later destroyed). As the Wisconsin Centennial celebration at the state capital of Madison ran from June 27 to July 5, it's doubtful that any coins were available at that time. Advance orders may have been taken there, as Q. David Bowers related that a number of coins were sold during the fair. Most, however, were likely sold through the efforts of the Coin Committee, which

THE BOOKER T. WASHINGTON—GEORGE WASHINGTON CARVER HALF DOLLAR



Obverse



Reverse

Obverse: Look for wear on the cheek bone of George Washington Carver, but remember this area was very poorly struck except for the 1952–Philadelphia issue.

Reverse: Wear will be apparent on the letters U.S.A. Look for criss-cross friction lines in the aforementioned areas.

THE WISCONSIN TERRITORIAL CENTENNIAL HALF DOLLAR



Obverse



Reverse

Obverse: Wear will be apparent on the miner's hand seen holding a pickaxe.

Reverse: Look for wear on the shoulder of the badger.

THE YORK COUNTY, MAINE, TRICENTENARY HALF DOLLAR



Obverse



Reverse

Obverse: Wear will be apparent on the mounted sentry and on the coin's rim.

Reverse: Look for wear on the pine tree in the upper quarter of the shield and on the coin's rim.

THE SESQUICENTENNIAL (PHILADELPHIA) ISSUES

HALF DOLLAR



Obverse



Reverse

Obverse: Look for wear on the cheek bone of George Washington. With practice, one will be able to observe the difference between an almost uncirculated and uncirculated coin.

Reverse: Wear will be apparent just below the lower inscription on the Liberty Bell.

Derivative Coin Markets 101

Here is an understandable explanation of derivative coin markets.

Heidi is the proprietor of a coin shop in Detroit. In order to increase sales, she decides to allow her loyal customers (most are unemployed collectors) to buy now, but pay later. She keeps track of the items consumed on a ledger (thereby granting the customers loans).

Word gets around about Heidi's buy-now-pay-later marketing strategy and, as a result, increasing numbers of customers flood into Heidi's shop, and soon she has the largest sale volume for any shop in Detroit. By providing her customers' freedom from immediate payment demands, Heidi gets no resistance when she substantially increases her prices for coins, commemoratives and bullion. Her sales volume increases massively.

A young and dynamic vice-president at the local bank recognizes these customer debts as valuable future assets and increases Heidi's borrowing limit. He sees no reason for undue concern since he has the debts of the collectors as collateral.

At the bank's corporate headquarters, expert traders transform these customer loans into Commemorative Bonds, Coin Bonds and Bullion BONDS. These securities are then traded on security markets worldwide.

Naive investors don't really understand the securities being sold to them as these AAA secured bonds are really the debts of unemployed collectors. Nevertheless, their prices continually climb, and the securities become the top-selling items for some of the nation's leading brokerage houses who collect enormous fees on their sales, pay extravagant bonuses to their sales force,

and who in turn purchase exotic sports cars and multimillion dollar condominiums.

One day, although the bond prices are still climbing, a risk manager at the bank (subsequently fired due his negativity), decides that the time has come to demand payment on the debts incurred by the collectors at Heidi's coin shop. So Heidi demands payment from her collector patrons, but being unemployed, they cannot pay back their collecting debts. Therefore, Heidi cannot fulfill her loan obligations and claims bankruptcy.

Coin BONDS and Commemorative BONDS drops in price by 90%. Bullion BONDS perform better, stabilizing in price after dropping by 80 %. The decreased bond asset value destroys the bank's liquidity and prevents it from issuing new loans. The suppliers of Heidi's coin shop, having granted her generous payment extensions and having invested in the securities, are faced with writing off her debt and losing over 80% on her bonds. Her supplier claims bankruptcy, and her supplier is taken over by a competitor, who immediately closes the local place and lays off 20 workers.

Then the bank and brokerage houses are saved by the Government, following dramatic around-the-clock negotiations by leaders from both political parties.

Ultimately, the funds required for this rescue or bailout are obtained by a tax levied on the employed middle-class non-collectors. Which ultimately drives them to collect, thus starting another "natural worldwide financial cycle."

2010 American Veterans Disabled for Life Silver Dollar

The United States Mint



Members of the U.S. Armed Forces have answered the call to duty and served with distinction around the world -- from hitting the beaches in World War II in the Pacific and Europe, to the cold and difficult terrain of Korea, the steamy jungles of Vietnam and the desert sands of the Middle East. Americans owe a tremendous debt to those who gave so much of themselves for our country. These include the millions of disabled veterans who continue to live with the wounds and scars of military service; those who have died after living with those wounds and scars; and those who gave their lives while defending our principles of democracy.

The American Veterans Disabled for Life Commemorative Coin Act (Act) was passed by Congress and signed into law on July 17, 2008, as Public Law 110-277. The Act authorizes the United States Mint to mint and issue commemorative silver dollar coins in proof and uncirculated versions to honor these heroes. A surcharge of \$10 from the sale of each 2010 American Veterans Disabled for Life Silver Dollar is authorized to be paid to the Disabled Veterans' LIFE Memorial Foundation to support the construction of the American Veterans Disabled for Life Memorial in Washington, D.C., authorized by Congress in 2000.

The images on the 2010 American Veterans Disabled for Life Silver Dollar capture the service of the brave men and women who have honored us with their selfless duty to defend our country. These veterans often carry permanent life-altering disabilities that serve as strong reminders of the price of freedom.

The coin designs are emblematic of the many stories of our disabled veterans' courage, loyalty and sacrifice. The obverse features an image of the legs and boots of three veterans. The inscription in the banner along the upper rim, *THEY STOOD UP FOR US*, pays tribute to our courageous disabled veterans who have survived military service injuries for our freedom. Additional inscriptions are *IN GOD WE TRUST*, *2010* and *LIBERTY*.

The reverse design depicts a forget-me-not flower at the base of a wreath wrapped in a ribbon that cradles and supports clusters of oak branches. The oak branches represent strength, while the forget-me-not is a widely recognized icon that first served as a reminder of those who fought and became disabled in World War I. The significance of the small blue flowers is attributable to an image conveyed by World War I soldiers who had seen them growing on the graves of comrades and allies who had been killed. After the war, the flower became the accepted symbol for commemorating those who had fallen. The inscriptions are *Take This Moment to Honor Our Disabled Defenders of Freedom*, *UNITED STATES OF AMERICA*, *E PLURIBUS UNUM* and *ONE DOLLAR*.

Coin Specifications:

Weight: 26.73 grams nominal

Diameter: 1.500 inches (±0.003) or 38.10 mm (±0.08)

Composition: 90% Silver; 10% Copper

Mintage Limit: 350,000 across all product options

SOCIETY FOR U.S. COMMEMORATIVE COINS

A Not-for-Profit Corporation



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Society for U.S. Commemorative Coins

- I hereby apply for membership in the *Society for U.S. Commemorative Coins* (SUSCC), subject to the bylaws of said Society.
- Membership runs from January 1st to December 31st of each year.
- Annual Dues: \$20.00 per adult and \$10.00 per Junior (Age 17 and under).

Name

Address

City

State and Zip Code

Daytime Telephone Number

Signature of Applicant

Date

Signature and Membership Number of Sponsor (optional)

Birth Date (Junior Members)

Signature of Parent or Guardian (Junior Members)

Enclose dues with your application (copy ok) and send to:

SUSCC, P.O. Box 2335, Huntington Beach, CA 92647